

**Resolution to Suspend the Search for a Superintendent of Schools and
Name Dr. Joris M. Ray as Superintendent**

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Tennessee Code Annotated § 49-2-301 and § 49-2-203, each local board of education is authorized to and is the sole authority in appointing a director of schools (Superintendent); and

WHEREAS, The Shelby County Board of Education (hereafter referred to as “Board”) policy #1002 (Superintendent Selection and Appointment Procedures) provides:

The selection process and appointment of the Superintendent of Schools is a function of the Board. The Board shall seek to employ the person it believes can most effectively translate into action the policies of the Board and the goals of the community and the professional staff. At the Board's discretion, it may commence the Superintendent Selection Process (see section B) and/or Appointment Procedures (see section A), after notice to 1) the incumbent Superintendent, where applicable, and 2) the public of its intent to conduct a Superintendent search and/or appoint a Superintendent. A Superintendent search is open to all qualified candidates. The Board, in its discretion, may cease the Selection Process at any point; and

WHEREAS, Board policy #1002 further provides:

The Board of Education shall appoint a person to serve as Superintendent of Schools, who meets at least the qualifications described in policy #1003 Superintendent: Qualifications and any additional qualifications criteria approved by the Board. Following the appointment, the Superintendent shall enter into a contract with the Board of Education. This renewable contract shall be for a period of up to four years and shall specify compensation, benefits, and other terms of employment; and

WHEREAS, the Board is the sole authority on school matters within the county, and the Superintendent of Schools is subordinate to the Board, and charged with carrying out the Board’s vision and goals; and

WHEREAS, the Board shall seek to employ and hold accountable the person it believes can most effectively translate into action the policies of the Board and the goals of the community and the professional staff; and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2018, the Board voted unanimously for Dr. Joris M. Ray to become Interim Superintendent of Shelby County Schools upon the departure of former Superintendent Dorsey E. Hopson, II; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray, a native Memphian, is a product of Shelby County Schools and has committed his life to the betterment of Memphis and Shelby County; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray has diligently served the District for 22 years and risen through the ranks in his leadership roles and responsibilities; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Ray has displayed the talent, skills, and leadership abilities to assume the role as Superintendent; and

WHEREAS, the Board has heard from countless teachers, students, school leaders, parents, and community members about the positive qualities of Dr. Ray; and

WHEREAS, the District is confronted with numerous high impact issues requiring immediate attention from permanent leadership, including, but not limited to: the ongoing fiscal challenges presented by a history of incomplete funding for Tennessee's Basic Education Program (BEP); a proliferation of unfunded mandates that stretch dollars intended for serving children beyond their expected uses; the creation of a TN Public Charter School Commission (state-wide authorizer); the emergence of vouchers as an ominous example of privatization of public education dollars; and an overwhelming need to focus District efforts on addressing the challenges of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), while ensuring equity.

WHEREAS, time is of the essence and the Board does not feel that it can afford to have the District held at a stand-still while a national search progresses or unnecessarily spend money on a search when an exceedingly qualified candidate is currently serving as the Interim Superintendent.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Board dispense with and cease all efforts to conduct a national search for a permanent Superintendent, and after appropriate notice to the public of its intent to appoint a Superintendent:

- 1) The Board shall appoint Dr. Joris M. Ray, who meets the qualifications described in state law, Board policy, and any additional qualifications and criteria approved by the Board, to serve as Superintendent of Schools; and that,
- 2) Following the appointment, the Board shall enter into a contract with Dr. Joris M. Ray.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the terms and conditions for the position of Superintendent shall be negotiated in the amended contract between said parties by no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date of this resolution.

Submitted by Vice Chair Stephanie P. Love
District 3
April 30, 2019